



# THE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

## *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution*

### A TEACHER'S GUIDE

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# Introduction

*The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution* is a short film (17 min) examining the relationship between the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, popular culture, fashion, and contemporary society. The film begins with a look at the role of suits, dresses, and gospel songs in reaffirming respectability and solidarity of African Americans in the early Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. The film also examines the Civil Rights Movement's influence on folk and soul music, the rise of Dashikis and natural hairstyles, and the impact of the Civil Rights Movement on the popular culture and fashion of the anti-Vietnam War movement.



The film examines the different ways fashion and popular culture were used by civil rights leaders and activists in the struggle for social change and equality. In the process, the film explores several organizations of the Civil Rights Movement including: the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Black Panther Party, and the Black Power Movement.

*Memphis State Eight ca. 1955. Photograph courtesy of Special Collections, The University of Memphis Libraries.*

By viewing the film and completing the activities of this lesson plan, students will cultivate their critical thinking skills as they contemplate how music, fashion, and culture was influenced by the Civil Rights Movement.

This film was produced by The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change at the University of Memphis. The Hooks Institute's mission is teaching, studying, and promoting civil rights and social change. To learn more about the Hooks Institute, or to inquire about additional learning materials and documentaries, please visit our website at [www.memphis.edu/benhooks](http://www.memphis.edu/benhooks).



*Ester Hurt Jr. May, 1969. Photograph Courtesy of Special Collections, The University of Memphis Libraries.*

# Activity One

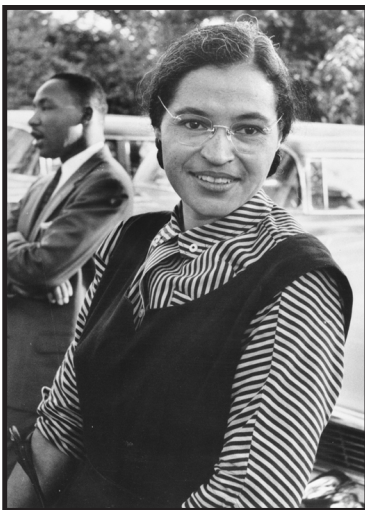
## Fashion as Visual Communication

**Objective:** Students will analyze visual documents for purpose, argument, and historical significance. To assess the students' knowledge of the civil rights movement, students will answer a series of questions found in the "Photograph Analysis Worksheets" (p. 5-6) before viewing the film. After viewing the film, students will reassess their answers as they use the worksheets to write a historical essay in Activity Four.

### Materials Needed:

- Photographs from the film, *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution* (Figures 1 and 2 available on p. 3-4 and pictured below).
- "Photograph Analysis Worksheets" (p. 5-6)

**Instructions:** Before viewing the film, teachers will undertake a critical analysis of Figures 1 and 2 using the guided questions below to determine the historical context and purpose of the photographs. Afterwards, students will examine the photographs as historical primary source materials as they complete the "Photograph Analysis Worksheets." After watching the film, students will reexamine their answers as they complete their historical paragraph in Activity Four.



*Figure 1. Left: Rosa Parks (foreground)  
Martin Luther King (background).  
Photograph, National Archives and  
Records Administration, Records of the U.S.  
Information Agency Record Group 303*



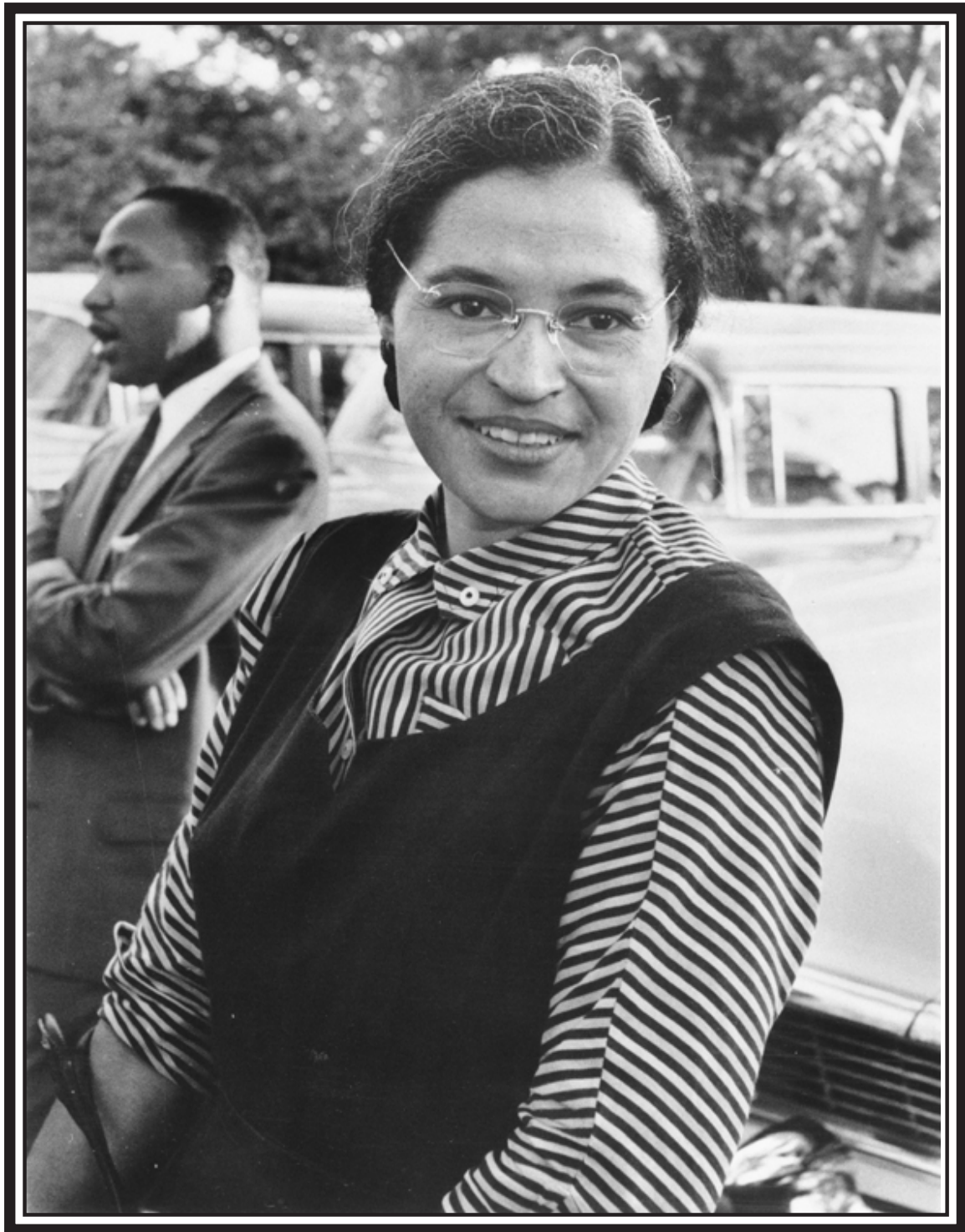
*Figure 2. Right: Gwendolyn Rankins. May 1969.  
Photograph courtesy of Special Collections,  
The University of Memphis Libraries*

### Guided Questions:

- What do you see in the pictures? Who do you see in the pictures?
- Compare the women in the pictures. How are they the same? How are they different?
- What conclusions can you make about the two people based on the pictures? Are these conclusions fair? Can we really draw accurate conclusions about a person based on their dress? Why or Why not?
- Imagine yourself as an African American at the time each picture was taken. What was everyday life like? How had things changed in the period from figure 1 to figure 2? Explain your reasoning. Describe the political, social, and cultural atmosphere of American society at the time these pictures were taken.
- Why are these women dressed differently? What does this tell us about the changing culture of the 1960s? Explain your reasoning.



## Figure 1: Rosa Parks ca. 1955



**Figure 1: Photograph of Rosa Parks with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (ca. 1955). Caption. *Mrs. Rosa Parks altered the Negro progress in Montgomery, Alabama, 1955, by the bus boycott she began.* Photograph, National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. Information Agency, Record Group 306.**

## Figure 2: Gwendolyn Rankins 1969



Figure 2: The African Look...MSU Students Give U.S. Version in 'Black Magic' Fashion Show, Press Scimitar, May 16, 1969. Photograph , Special Collections, The University of Memphis Libraries.

# Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Study each photographs for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photographs and then answer the following questions for each photograph.

**1. Who or what do you see in the photographs? List and describe at least two distinct historical related to the Civil Rights Movement from each.**

### Figure 1

[illegible]

### Figure 2

[illegible]

**2. What decade were these photographs taken? What was happening at the time?**

**Figure 1**

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**Figure 2**

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**3. Why do you think these photographs were taken? Explain your reasoning.**

**Figure 1**

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**Figure 2**

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# Activity Two

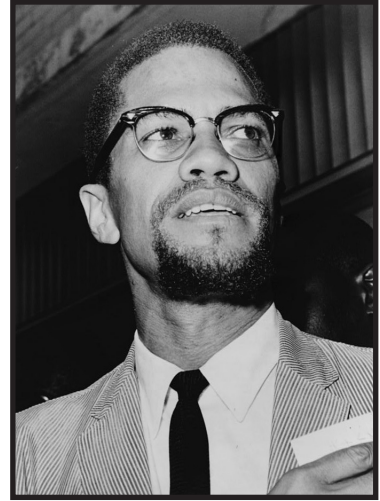
## Viewing: The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution

**Objective:** Students will view *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution*. During the film, students will complete the “*Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution Worksheet*” (p. 8). Through the film, students will examine how popular culture and fashion inspired, motivated, and influenced the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, the film will survey the Civil Rights Movement as well as major political and social leaders of the period.

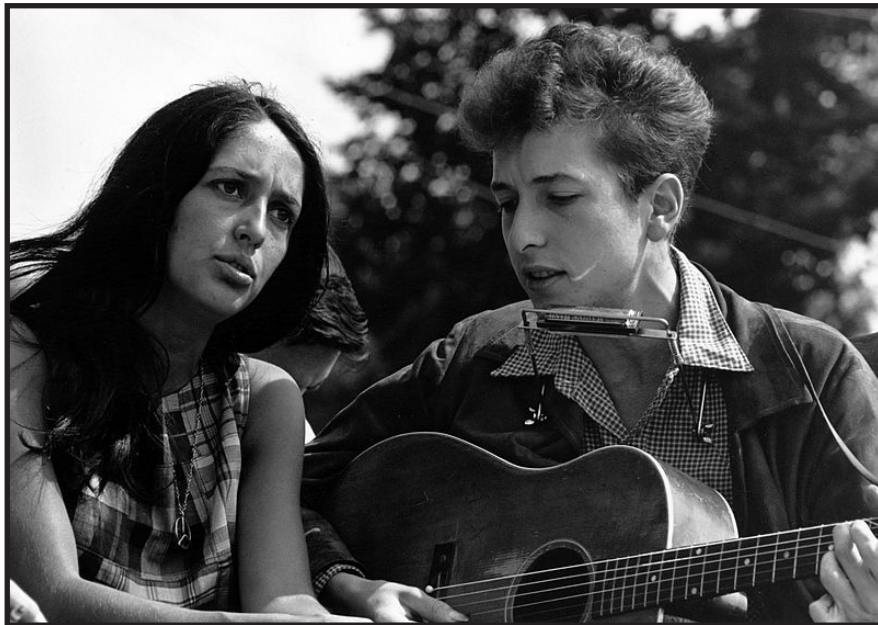
**Materials Needed:**

- “The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution Worksheet”
- View Film *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution*

**Instructions:** Have students watch the film *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution* and complete the “*A Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution Worksheet*.” Before showing the film, encourage students to contemplate how the film uses popular culture and fashion to create a historical argument about the past.



*Malcolm X ca. 1962*



*Joan Baez and Bob Dylan: March on Washington 1963.*

# The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution

## Worksheet

1. In the 1950s and 1960s, \_\_\_\_\_ was the cultural and social center of the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Written in the early 1900s Charles Albert Tindley's gospel song \_\_\_\_\_ was adapted by Pete Seeger and Guy Carawan for the Civil Rights Movement in the song \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ wrote "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carrol" to protest the murder of Hattie Carrol by William Zatzinger at a Baltimore Hotel in the early 1960s.
4. In 1963, Sam Cooke released \_\_\_\_\_, which gave African Americans hope that eventually things would change for the better.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ called for African Americans to take pride in their heritage in his song "I'm Black and I'm Proud".
6. \_\_\_\_\_ rendition of "Respect" called for American society to respect both women and African Americans as people.
7. Kente \_\_\_\_\_ is a brightly colored garment, developed in Western African countries such as Ghana and Senegal, often used as material to create Dashikis.
8. Dressed from head to toe in black clothes, the controversial \_\_\_\_\_ used a symbol of a panther to represent the strength of oppressed African Americans.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ immortalized the symbol for black power when he raised a clenched fist.
10. Flower children used the strategies of the Civil Rights Movement to protest the United States involvement in the \_\_\_\_\_.

# The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution

## Worksheet (Answer Sheet)

1. In the 1950s and 1960s, The Church was the cultural and social center of the Civil Rights Movement.
2. Written in the early 1900s Charles Albert Tindley's gospel song "I'll Overcome Someday" was adapted by Pete Seeger and Guy Carawan for the Civil Rights Movement in the song "We Shall Overcome".
3. Bob Dylan wrote "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carrol" to protest the murder of Hattie Carrol by William Zatzinger at a Baltimore Hotel in the early 1960s.
4. In 1963, Sam Cooke released "A Change Is Gonna Come", which gave African Americans hope that eventually things would change for the better.
5. James Brown called for African Americans to take pride in their heritage in his song "I'm Black and I'm Proud".
6. Aretha Franklin's rendition of "Respect" called for American society to respect both women and African Americans as people.
7. Kente Cloth is a brightly colored garment, developed in Western African countries such as Ghana and Senegal, often used as material to create Dashikis.
8. Dressed from head to toe in black clothes, the controversial Black Panther Party used a symbol of a panther to represent the strength of oppressed African Americans.
9. Stokely Carmichael immortalized the symbol for black power when he raised a clenched fist.
10. Flower children used the strategies of the Civil Rights Movement to protest the United States involvement in the Vietnam War.

# Activity Three

## What Role Does Fashion, Music, and Culture play in Today's World?

**Objective:** Students should relate the argument of the film to today's world. Students should consider how today social movements can influence popular songs and fashion in much the same way the Civil Rights Movement inspired the culture of the 1960s.

**Instructions:** After viewing the film, the teacher will lead the class through a discussion of modern day cultural forms that call for social action, expose social injustices, or express group solidarity for social progress and equality.

### Guided Questions:

- Can anyone name a contemporary song that is influenced by a social movement? How does this song use culture to express a call to action? What groups use this song? What is the song trying to say? How do groups and activists use this song to create social change?
- Can anyone identify a style of fashion used to bring attention to a social, political, or civil cause in today's world? What does this fashion look like? What are they trying to say?
- How could you use music and fashion in today's world to expose social injustice? What would you try to say with these cultural forms? How would you say it?
- Can anyone name an instance where fashion or music was used to advance a cause in your community? In your city? In the United States? Explain how music or fashion was used to highlight their cause?



*Chicago Protest for Trayvon Martin.  
Photograph by FJJ. March 2012.*



# Activity Four

## Open Question/Essay

**Objective:** After viewing the film, students will critically analyze the film in a class discussion. Students will examine the film's argument, evidence, and historical interpretation. Afterwards, students will write a short essay examining the relationship among the civil rights movement, fashion, popular culture, and American society.



**Instructions:** After viewing the film, the teacher will lead a critical discussion on the film's argument about the influence of fashion and popular culture on the civil rights movement of the 1960s. After the discussion, students will use their notes, textbook, and their "Photograph Analysis Worksheet" to write a short historical essay arguing for or against the statement: "The Civil Rights Movement ushered in an era of a cultural revolution in the United States."

*Pete Seeger ca. 1955*

## Discussion Questions

- What is the film's argument? What kind of historical evidence does the film use? How does the film use this evidence? How does the film structure its argument? What are the film's assumptions? What are the film's values?
- How can we examine cultural forms to explain a historical period or society?
- If you were going to make a film on the cultural effects of contemporary civil rights issues, what style of fashion, what kind of songs, or what other art forms would you use as evidence to structure your argument?

### Question for Paragraph:

The film, *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution*, examines the impact of popular culture on the Civil Rights Movement. Create a historical argument and explain your reasoning in a short essay (3-5 paragraphs) using your class notes, the textbook, and the "Photograph Analysis Worksheets" in response to the following statement: "The Civil Rights Movement ushered in an era of a cultural revolution in the United States."

## Rubric (For use with Activity Four)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Category	Percentage	Superior	Good	Average	Poor	Scores/Comments
<b>Apparent Effort: 20%</b>	Worth: 20% Superior: 18-20 Good: 14-17 Average: 9-13 Poor: 0-8	The project was submitted on time. The student worked hard on the project and paid close attention to details. The student utilized time and resources effectively.	The project was submitted on time. It is evident the student worked hard on the project, but he or she could have paid better attention to details and/or utilized time and resources more effectively.	The project was not submitted on time and/or the student did not put enough work into the project. Avoidable mistakes were made, and time/resources were not utilized effectively. However, the student did complete the project as instructed.	The project was not submitted in a timely manner, and/or the student did not put much, if any, work into the project. The project appeared to be hastily constructed and full of avoidable mistakes. The student did not follow instruction or utilize time and resources effectively.	
<b>Creativity: 20%</b>	Worth: 20% Superior: 18-20 Good: 14-17 Average: 9-13 Poor: 0-8	The student thought outside of the given instructions to create a unique project. The student's project stood out positively from among the projects of his or her peers.	The student did show some creativity and did not create a project exactly like those of his or her peers. However, the student could have put more effort into creating a completely unique project.	The student followed instructions and did not plagiarize. However, he or she showed little or no creativity in the project.	The student plagiarized his or her ideas from another student. His or her project was a replica of another student's project.	

<b>Professionalism/Pre-sentation: 30%</b>	<p>Worth: 30% Superior: 26-30 Good: 20-25 Average: 13-19 Poor: 0-12</p>	<p>The student presented his or her findings professionally and with excellent grammar/usage. The student followed directions and addressed the prompt presented.</p>	<p>The student presented his or her findings with some grammatical/usage errors. The student followed directions and addressed the prompt presented.</p>	<p>The student needed improvement on presenting his or her findings professionally, and/or the project suffered greatly from grammatical/usage errors. The student attempted to follow directions and address the prompt, but he or she was not entirely successful.</p>	<p>The student did not present his or her findings professionally, and the project was full of grammatical and usage errors. He or she ignored the instructions/prompt provided.</p>	
<b>Interpretation/Argumentation: 30%</b>	<p>Worth: 30% Superior: 27-30 Good: 24-26 Average: 16-23 Poor: 0-15</p>	<p>The student accurately presented his or her research and effectively argued/presented his or her points. The student's project was clear and well-organized.</p>	<p>The student accurately presented his or her research and presented mostly factual information. The student was a little unclear and/or confused on some information included in the project. The student argued well, but he or she could improve the organization, persuasiveness, or research accuracy.</p>	<p>The student made several factual errors in the project and/or did not accurately present his or her research. The student's argument needed to be clearer, and the project needed great improvement in its organization, persuasiveness, or research accuracy.</p>	<p>The student made gross errors in accuracy. He or she made many factual mistakes and/or did not accurately present his or her research. The student's arguments were neither clear nor well presented. The project needed great improvement in organization, persuasiveness, and research</p>	
<b>Total</b>						

# Standards Covered:

## Tennessee High School History

Below is a list of standards addressed by the guide and/ or the documentary *The Civil Rights Movement: A Cultural Revolution*.

### U.S. History and Geography (Post-Reconstruction)

**US.31** Describe the growth and effects of radio and movies and their role in the worldwide diffusion of popular culture. (C, G)

**US.43** Analyze the rise of celebrities as icons of popular culture, including Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Jack Dempsey, Red Grange, Bessie Smith, Billy Sunday, and Charles Lindbergh. (C)

**US.80** Describe the causes, course, and consequences of the Vietnam War...(C, G, H, P)

**US. 81** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence evaluating the impact of the Vietnam War on the home front, including the Anti-War movement, draft by lottery, and the role of television and the media. (C, H, P)

**US.83** Examine multiple sources presented in different media and formats to explain the impact of the baby boom generation on the American economy and culture. (C, E, G, P)

**US.85** Analyze the increasing impact of television and mass media on the American home, American politics, and the American economy. (C, E, P)

**US.86** Describe the emergence of a youth culture, including beatniks and the progression of popular music from swing to rhythm and blues to rock 'n roll and the significance of Tennessee, including Sun Studios, Stax Records, and Elvis Presley. (C, E, TN)

**US.90** Examine the roles of civil rights advocates, including the following: (C, H, P, TN)

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Malcolm X...

Rosa Parks

Stokely Carmichael ....

**US.92** Describe significant events in the struggle to secure civil rights for African Americans... (C, H, P, TN)

**US.94** Analyze the civil rights and voting rights legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1968, and the 24th Amendment. (C, E, H, P)

**US.97** Interpret different points of view that reflect the rise of social activism and the counterculture, hippies, generation gap, and Woodstock. (C, P)



## **African American History**

**AAH. 12:** Identify and explain the contributions of African Americans in science and the arts. (C)

**AAH. 17:** Assess the economic and social impact of Jim Crow laws on African Americans. (C, H, E)

**AAH. 21:** Describe the development of African American institutions such as religion, education, and benevolent organizations. (C)

**AAH. 25:** Describe the contributions of African Americans to the performing arts including Fisk Jubilee Singers, W.C. Handy, John Work III, and DeFord Bailey. (C, TN)<sup>1</sup>

**AAH. 27:** Evaluate the Impact of the African American Media on American Life. (C)

**AAH. 30:** Evaluate the continued quest for civil rights in America. (C, P)

**AAH. 31:** Describe the effects of African American “pop” culture of the 1930’s and 1940’S. (C)

**AAH. 37:** Define various methods used to obtain civil rights. (C, H)

**AAH. 38:** Identify various organizations and their role in the Civil Rights Movement, including the Highlander Folk School. (C, H, P, TN)<sup>2</sup>

**AAH. 39:** Assess the extent to which the Civil Rights Movement transformed American politics and society. (C, H, P)

**AAH. 40:** Determine the impact of the Vietnam War on the Civil Rights Movement. (C, H, P)

**AAH. 42:** Identify and analyze how the changing political environment has impacted civil rights. (P)

**AAH. 44:** Compare and contrast the responses of African Americans to economic, social, and political challenges of contemporary America.

**AAH. 47:** Identify the major contributions of contemporary African Americans in business, education, the arts, politics, sports, science, technology, and society in general, including Wilma Rudolph, Tina Turner, and Oprah Winfrey. (C, TN)



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